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A PART OF A DISSERTATION SUBMITTED TO THE FACULTY OF THE DIVISION OF THE SOCIAL SCIENCES IN CANDIDACY FOR THE DEGREE OF DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY

DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
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By
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Bulletin of the Bureau of School Service, Vol. XV, No. 2
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FUNCTIONS OF THE PRIVATE SECONDARY SCHOOL

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This report of a comparative study of twenty-four secondary schools affiliated with the Methodist Episcopal Church contains: (1) a brief statement of the purpose, scope, and method of the investigations; (2) a review of some of the outstanding comparisons made in the study; (3) a presentation of the functions of private secondary education as advocated by various writers and a discussion of these functions in the light of the findings of the investigation of Methodist secondary schools; and (4) a brief statement concerning the junior college as a field of service for Methodist secondary schools.

Purpose, Scope, and Method

The purpose of this investigation is to make and report a critical study of the program of secondary education as supported by the Methodist Episcopal Church through its Board of Education. It is hoped that the investigation will prove helpful to the educational leaders of this church and of the institutions concerned as they plan their future educational program. The investigation should also aid education in general by contributing factual information concerning a type of secondary education in which relatively little research has been attempted.

The program of secondary education which the Methodist Episcopal Church supports included in 1930-31 twenty-eight institutions. This investigation covers twenty-four of these twenty-eight schools. The seven schools located in New England, the eight located in the Middle Atlantic States, and the one located in Illinois are grouped in this study as the "Eastern Schools." The remaining eight schools, located in four Southern States, are grouped as the "Southern Schools."

The investigation consists of comparative studies of the Methodist secondary schools individually and in groups, and

of comparative studies of these Methodist schools with other privately supported secondary schools, with public high schools, and with colleges supported by the Methodist Episcopal Church.

The data for the twenty-four Methodist schools were gathered by the writer while he was a member of the Survey Staff for Secondary School of the Board of Education of the Methodist Episcopal Church. The seventy mimeographed schedules on which the data were secured were not considered complete until they had been used at one of the schools and until the data for this school were tabulated.

The writer visited twenty-three of the schools during the school year 1929-30 and one during 1930-31. The chief administrative officer of each institution was requested, in advance of the visit of the writer, to be available for as much time as necessary to assist in securing the data. This official was also requested to have his administrative and instructional staffs ready to assist in filling out the various schedules. Thus, it was immediately possible for the writer, upon arrival at an institution, to review each schedule briefly with the chief administrative officer and to assign the schedules with his help and advice to the officials and instructors who could most satisfactorily supply the desired data. The writer then personally instructed the various persons to whom schedules had been assigned and was present to answer questions relative to interpretations of the directions or concerning other matters. Some of the schedules were filled in by the writer in conference with the school officials.

One of the most elaborate schedules is the questionnaire consisting of twenty-four questions which was submitted to each instructor in any of the four-year high school subjects. The usual procedure was for an administrative officer to call a meeting of the faculty where the questionnaires were distributed and explained by the writer. The teachers were requested to ask the writer for any needed assistance, to place the questionnaires when completed in envelopes, and to hand the envelopes sealed to the writer.

Another elaborate schedule consisting of twenty-two questions was submitted to all the four-year high school pupils

present on one of the days of the visit. The chief administrative officer introduced the writer to the pupils; then the administrative officer and the instructor withdrew from the auditorium, leaving the writer in charge of the pupils.

The Terman Group Test of Mental Ability, Form A, and the Haggerty Reading Test, Sigma 3, Form A, were administered by the writer to the four-year high school pupils of all but one of the twenty-four schools.

Comparisons of the Methodist secondary schools with other private secondary school groups, with public high school groups, and with Methodist colleges are made by referring to the findings from several related studies. The most important of these sources include the comparative study of private and secondary education made by Koos,[1] the inquiry concerning programs of studies and education of teachers in private and public secondary schools of Minnesota carried on by Mackenzie,[2] the study of private schools for boys made by Cole,[3] the evaluation of private secondary education reported by Boyce,[4] the survey of thirty-five Methodist colleges made by Reeves and others,[5] and bulletins published by the United States Office of Education.

Outstanding Comparisons

Eastern Schools and Southern Schools. Data presented in the study reveal that the Eastern Group of Methodist secondary schools, which are considerably older, have advantages over the younger Southern Schools. The Eastern Schools have larger student bodies than the Southern Schools, more valuable physical plants, greater drawing power, pupils with considerably higher intelligence quotients and greater reading ability, and larger salaries for teachers and administrative officers. In addition, they have endowments of significant size.

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[1] Leonard V. Koos. *Private and Public Secondary Education.* University of Chicago Press, Chicago, Illinois. 1932.

[2] Gordon N. Mackenzie. *Programs of Studies and Training of Teachers in Private and Public Secondary Schools of Minnesota.* Unpublished Master's thesis, Graduate School, University of Minnesota. 1929.

[3] Robert D. Cole. *Private Secondary Education for Boys in the United States.* Westbrook Publishing Company, Philadelphia, Pennsylvania. 1928.

[4] George A. Boyce. "Is the Private School Fulfilling Its Functions?" *School Review,* XXXVII, May, 1929. p. 347–362.

[5] Floyd W. Reeves and others. *The Liberal Arts College.* The University of Chicago Press, Chicago, Illinois. 1932.

Comparisons show the two groups of schools to be very similar in some respects, however. No Methodist secondary school has organized its work on the basis of the junior and senior high school division. Fire hazards are common to both groups. "Parental wishes" is the greatest factor responsible for the enrollment of the pupils in the Eastern as well as in the Southern Schools. A large percentage of overage pupils is characteristic. The percentage of graduates who have attended college and the percentage of pupils who plan to attend college are approximately the same in the Eastern Schools as in the Southern Schools. All programs of studies are very conservative, with a noticeable neglect of science and social studies. Although salaries are considerably higher in the Eastern Schools, the general preparation of the instructional staffs does not appear to be superior to that of the teachers of the Southern Group.

The comparisons that are made in the study do not often reveal the Southern Schools as superior to the Eastern Schools. However, data relative to administration show that the organization of the boards of control of the Southern Schools more nearly conforms to accepted practices than does the organization of the boards of the Eastern Schools. The professional preparation of the instructional staffs is shown to be greater in the Southern Group.

Methodist secondary schools and other private schools. A large number of the comparisons of Methodist schools with other private schools indicate that the Methodist secondary schools are unique in many respects. The Eastern Schools were founded earlier than a majority of the non-Catholic private schools of the United States. A much larger percentage of Methodist secondary schools than of private schools is coeducational. The percentage of pupils in the various grades of the Eastern Group increases from grade to grade. Pupils who are overage chronologically are found in larger percentages in Methodist schools than in any other group of schools studied.

The curriculums of Methodist schools, like those of most of the private schools studied, are in the main very conservative. Certain differences are found, however. Methodist

schools offer curriculums of the "combination" type more frequently than do the private schools. This type of organization is composed of various curriculums, each having constants and electives. The needs of "non-college-going" pupils are recognized more in the organizations of the curriculums than is true in most private school curriculums. The number of courses offered in Methodist schools is considerably larger than the number in other private schools of similar size. Methodist schools are particularly weak, however, in their offerings in science and social science.

The instructional staffs of the Eastern Schools include a larger percentage of men than the staffs of other school groups. Both general preparation and the professional preparation of the instructors of the Eastern Schools rank low in the comparisons.

The boards of control of Methodist secondary schools are in general larger than the boards of other private schools. The fees charged by the Eastern Schools are low when compared with the fees charged by other private schools in the same sections of the country.

Methodist secondary schools and public high schools. Before the development of public secondary education, many of the Methodist secondary schools served their respective communities and states as the public high schools serve today. However, the comparisons made in this study show that now most of these Methodist schools are at best only mediocre in their educational programs, while the public high school leads the way in secondary education. The Methodist schools shun the junior high school type of organization; they continue to offer curriculums that show little revision in the light of modern curriculum practices; they employ instructional staffs with very meagre professional preparation; they engage in no research or experimentation. Only occasionally in this study do the comparisons show Methodist schools to be superior to public high schools.

Methodist secondary schools and Methodist colleges. Comparisons of Methodist secondary schools with Methodist colleges reveal a number of interesting and significant facts. A majority of the pupils of Methodist secondary schools are affiliated with

denominations other than the Methodist Episcopal Church, while in the Methodist colleges a majority of the students are affiliated with the Methodist Episcopal Church. The boards of control for the secondary schools are smaller in general than those for the colleges. The Methodist colleges practice more of the commonly accepted safeguards in finance than do the secondary schools. Auditing by certified public accountants, countersigning of checks, and bonding of financial officials are practices seldom found in Methodist secondary schools, although they are common in Methodist colleges. The outstanding comparison of Methodist secondary schools with Methodist colleges is that the Eastern Schools spend as much to give a pupil a year of high school education as the median Methodist college spends to give a student a year of college education.

Functions Advocated for Private Secondary Schools

There are presented in Table 1 thirteen functions of private secondary education as advocated by certain writers. These functions are found in one or more of the following books or magazine articles:

Norman Fenton. "Aspects of the Private School Problem." *School and Society*, XVIII, August 18, 1923.

Alfred E. Stearns. "The American Academy." *Types of Schools for Boys*. Edited by M. V. O'Shea. Bobbs-Merrill Company, Indianapolis, Indiana. 1917.

Robert D. Cole. *Private Secondary Education for Boys in the United States*. Westbrook Publishing Company, Philadelphia, Pennsylvania. 1928.

James G. Croswell. "The Private Secondary School." *Principles of Secondary Education*. Edited by Paul Monroe The Macmillan Company, New York. 1914.

George A. Boyce. "Is the Private School Fulfilling Its Function?" *School Review*, XXXVII, May, 1929.

W. Carson Ryan, Jr. *Friends' School—Report of a Study of Schools under Friends' Meetings, or Conducted by Friends. . . .* Bulletin of Swarthmore College, XXIV, No. 3. Supplement, third month. 1927.

William G. Thayer. "The Future Trend of the Private School." *The Education of the Modern Boy*. Edited by Alfred E Stearns. Small, Maynard, and Company, Boston, Massachusetts. 1925.

H. W. Mattfield, Jr. "Can Any Good Thing Come Out of the Private School?" *School and Society*, XXII, August 22, 1925.

Leonard V. Koos. *Private and Public Secondary Education*. The University of Chicago Press, Chicago, Illinois. 1931.

Table 1. Functions of Private Secondary Education as Advocated by Certain Writers During the Past Fifteen Years*

Function	Number Who Advocated Each Function	Writers								
		Stearns	Fenton	Cole	Cros-well	Boyce	Ryan	Thayer	Matt-field	Koos
To conduct experimentation	6	x	—	x	x	x	x	—	x	—
To give religious and moral training	5	x	x	—	x	x	x	—	—	—
To replace the home	5	x	—	x	—	x	x	—	—	x
To care for misfits from the public high school	4	—	x	x	—	—	—	x	x	—
To raise academic standards, to have superior academic programs	3	—	x	x	—	—	—	x	—	—
To prepare for college	3	—	—	x	x	x	—	—	—	—
To develop systematic habits of work and thought	2	x	x	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
To provide for social selection	2	x	—	—	x	—	—	—	—	—
To provide secondary education for communities which either have no public high school or have inadequate high school facilities	2	x	—	—	—	—	x	—	—	—
To train leadership for service in a democracy	1	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
To provide an additional year of training for college after graduation from public high school	1	—	x	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
To provide "finishing" for high school graduates who will not attend college	1	—	x	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
To provide vocational training	1	—	—	—	x	—	—	—	—	—
Total		6	6	5	5	4	4	3	2	1

* The writers and publications are given on the preceding page.

It is impossible in presenting the thirteen functions completely to prevent overlapping in meaning, although each function represents a distinct purpose. Neither is it claimed that this presentation is a scientific analysis of all functions advocated for private secondary education. However, since there is a very noticeable scarcity of published materials that concern private secondary education, the nine books or articles reviewed constitute a much larger percentage of the relevant published materials than might ordinarily be expected. In some instances it was necessary to decide arbitrarily whether or not a writer intended to advocate the function under discussion; in a large majority of the cases, however, there is no doubt that the writers advocate as the special purposes of private secondary education those functions listed in Table 1.

Attention is called to the following general situations revealed by examination of the data of Table 1: (1) "to conduct experimentation" is mentioned most frequently, six of the writers supporting this function; (2) "to give religious and moral training" and "to replace the home" are each advocated by five of the writers; (3) "to care for misfits of the public high schools" is the fourth most frequently mentioned function; (4) no other function is supported by more than three of the writers.

The thirteen functions advocated for private secondary schools will now be discussed separately in relation to the situation in Methodist secondary schools.

To conduct experimentation. Boyce has given his conception of the function of private schools in the following statement:

> Here, then, are the rules, the functions, which the private school has laid down for itself in the past: college preparation, religious training, and experimentation. Stated in general terms, the functions are economic, religious, and social, the last in the sense of improvement of the educational process. Moreover, never before has there been greater need for these three functions than there is today, when thousands are going to college, when literature is full of the need for religion, and when there is a great number of educational problems to be solved scientifically.[6]

[6] This writer admits a fourth function in another statement. George A. Boyce, "Is the Private School Fulfilling Its Function?" *School Review*, XXXVII, May, 1929. p. 352.

Cole, after making an extended study of private schools for boys, discusses experimentation as an aim of private schools:

> The position of freedom from outside influence and the more flexible organization which private schools enjoy has led in the past to the experimentation with new educational ideas which have borne fruit in general educational practice. The tradition is being maintained in the work of certain progressive and laboratory schools. Not all schools can perform this valuable function, but more can participate than do. There is no general disposition evident to criticize those schools which seriously attempt to further in a constructive way the cause of education as a whole. There is a very evident general disposition to question the social value of these schools which take the sons of wealthy and influential citizens and subject them to a regime which perpetuates the educational practices of the past simply because they are traditional.[7]

Another quotation from Boyce explains further the importance of experimentation in the past in private schools:

> Historians have observed that in the past practically every new movement in secondary education has begun in some private or semi-private institution and only gradually has been adopted by the public high school. The same is true of much elementary education.[8]

A review of the fragmentary and limited evidence relative to the purposes and services of the past for Methodist secondary schools indicates that many of them were, during their early history, pioneering in some phase or phases of educational practice. Some of the fields in which contributions seem to have been made are: (1) coeducation; (2) religious and moral training; (3) curriculum offerings; and (4) democratization of secondary education. Data show that, except in a few significant cases, this spirit of "blazing new trails" either has died or remains dormant in Methodist secondary schools. Some of the findings which indicate that the inauguration of scientific study of education in Methodist schools would be difficult are: (1) the curriculums are badly in need of revision, (2) supervision is very inadequate, (3) professional training of the instructors is usually less than that of instructors in other school groups, and (4) library and laboratory facilities are meager.

That Methodist schools are fairly typical of private schools generally with regard to their failure to conduct experimentation is seen from the following quotation:

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[7] Cole. *Op. cit.* p. 238.
[8] Boyce. *Op. cit.* p. 552.

Although it is admittedly not comprehensive of all relationships, the evidence at hand concerning private schools in Minnesota and elsewhere in the country gives little indorsement to the claim that private schools serve more often than public schools as centers of innovation and experimentation. Certainly, the comparison of the curriculum, one of the features of the school in which innovation and experimentation would early be reflected, disclosed no such tendency. The reader will recall that in the chapter dealing with the offering private schools were found to be more conservative than public schools.

Among the other more strictly curriculum innovations one may currently encounter in private schools of the country are the country-day feature, the Dalton plan, and occasional elements of junior high school reorganization. Of these the first has probably been carried farther than the second and the second farther than the third. All three have some bearing on the curriculum but can not affect it as fundamentally as desirable owing to the obeisance the private school of the independent type must make to the requirements for admission to college. (How inappropriate the term "independent" seems in this connection!) On the level of the elementary grades a small proportion of private schools can and do manifest a good deal of freedom and introduce a number of "progressive" features, but on the high-school level the dictates of the colleges are a serious obstacle to curriculum innovation. As with private schools of the country, certain of the schools in Minnesota have introduced the country-day feature. There is also an occasional school with beginnings in the other innovations named. But modification in experimental and innovational respects is slow to materialize in Minnesota as elsewhere.

That a few schools among a great host of a given type conceive and execute their function in part or whole in experimental terms affords justification of those few schools only. It can not be regarded as a blanket indorsement of the remainder of that host. These must justify their existence, if at all, in other ways. The plain fact is, as is inferable from the evidence of Chapter V, that public schools as a group are more favorably disposed to innovation and experimentation than private schools. We may hope that it is not out of place here to contend, against the usual belief, that public schools can and must be expected to try out novel procedures. They will do so increasingly as administrators and teachers come to be better trained in the methods of educational investigation.[9]

Briggs expresses a similar viewpoint in the following quotation: "It is a safe statement that today the experimentation most significant for social welfare is being done in schools under public control."[10]

Since within recent time Methodist schools have failed in general to conduct experimentation, they cannot justify their

[9] Leonard v. Koos. *Private and Public Secondary Education, op. cit.* p. 214-215.

[10] T. H. Briggs. "The Great Investment." *Secondary Education in a Democracy.* The Inglis Lecture, 1930. Harvard University Press, Cambridge, Massachusetts. 1930. p. 92.

existence on the claim of this most frequently advocated function for private secondary schools. However, it is undoubtedly true that there are contributions to education which these schools could make through experimentation if they utilized their potential freedom and improved their facilities.

To give religious and moral training. Croswell expresses his views of this function as follows:

> Government can in modern times recognize no religious body above another; the religious experience must be left to church and home. Here is the most powerful and apparently most permanent argument for the creation of private schools.[11]

Stearns states: "The academy has never lost sight of the great aim of its founders—the development of character."[12]

Thayer[13] minimizes the significance of this function, as peculiar to private schools, by referring to the many school systems where special arrangements have been made with the religious denominations of the particular community to give religious training during the school day.

Koos discusses a phase of this function under the heading of "denominational service of the private secondary school."

> The evidence of Chapter II leaves no doubt as to the high potency of church membership or preference in continuing the patronage of schools of certain denominations. At the same time there is little evidence in this investigation on whether we should or should not maintain denominational schools. The lower performance on tests in civics in certain groups of schools as shown in Chapter III is pertinent, but scarcely more than fragmentary evidence. There are those who would contend that an issue of this nature must be settled on deductive grounds, and even the most ardent inductionists among us must admit that solution of such a problem by the methods of a genuine science of society is still remote. In either case one is, for the time being at least, called upon to decide such an issue in relation to one's point of view. Although in the circumstances it may seem gratuitous to do so, the present writer ventures his personal judgment—he hopes, with some tolerance for the conflicting viewpoint of others—that the maintenance of separate denominational secondary schools will not in the long run comport with the best good of an integrated American society.[14]

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[11] James G. Croswell. "The Private Secondary School." *Principles of Secondary Education.* Edited by Paul Monroe. Macmillan Company, New York. 1914. p. 241.

[12] Alfred E. Stearns. "The American Academy," *Types of Schools for Boys.* Edited by M. V. O'Shea. Bobbs-Merrill Company, Indianapolis, Indiana. 1917. p. 13.

[13] William G. Thayer. *The Education of the Modern Boy,* "The Future Trend of the Private School," Edited by Alfred E. Stearns. Small, Maynard and Company, Boston, Massachusetts. 1925. p. 235.

[14] Koos. *Op. cit.* p. 216-217.

No evidence was found in this investigation which indicates that any attempt is made in Methodist secondary schools to teach the doctrines or to advance the cause of the Methodist denomination. Although it is true that in all of the schools except one a direct relation exists between the Methodist Episcopal Church and the Boards of Trustees, the following findings support the foregoing conclusion: (1) the percentage of the instructional staffs who were Methodists was no greater in the Eastern Schools than the percentage of pupils who were affiliated with the denomination; (2) the religious affiliations of the pupils were scattered among a large number of denominations with Methodist Episcopal Church affiliation in a majority at only seven institutions; (3) the church membership of the instructors was scattered among several denominations; (4) approximately 13 per cent of the pupils of the Eastern Schools were Catholics; (5) factors of attendance, such as influence of the home pastor and church affiliation, were not checked by large numbers of the pupils affiliated with the Methodist Episcopal Church.

All the Methodist schools have mentioned in their statements of aims the religious and moral function. Data indicate that these schools affect, with degrees of success that cannot be interpreted, the moral and religious life of their pupils. It is a matter of opinion as to which type of institution can best give religious and moral training or as to what method and subject matter should be used. The need of such training is undoubtedly present at all secondary schools and, therefore, should not be thought of as a peculiar function of any one type of school. Methodist secondary schools could improve the religious and moral training given in the following ways: (1) the chapel services could in some instances be made more effective; (2) the extra-curriculum programs could be better supervised, especially the management of the finances of these programs; (3) the examples of church relationship and civic interest as given by members of the instructional staffs could be improved; some are not church members, and others apparently take no interest in church work and civic enterprises; (4) the counselling programs could be made more effective; (5) some of the administrative practices in finance could be made more effective in safeguard-

ing the funds of the institutions; and (6) the offerings of the social studies could be enriched and brought up to date.

A considerable amount of research is needed before any definite conclusion can be reached concerning religious and moral training in schools. The various findings of the investigation suggest that Methodist secondary schools are not doing as much as they could do toward the accomplishment of an aim which they have all accepted. Thus, one of the two functions to be advocated by the second largest number of writers is recognized by Methodist secondary schools, but is not achieved by them effectively.

To replace the home. This function of private schools shares with the one previously discussed in being the second most frequently mentioned by the writers whose publications were studied. Koos, after investigating the problem from objective evidence, concludes:

> The evidence on parental mortality presented in Chapter II establishes the need for an institution which combines the services of the home and the school as this is done in the better boarding schools. This need is magnified, as may be judged from the quotations already made above on this subject, by the children whose homes are disrupted by causes other than death of one or both parents. Also, there is the small proportion of children who attend boarding schools and whose homes are remote from opportunities for secondary education. An occasional public school had made meager beginnings toward meeting such a need by establishing and maintaining a dormitory, but this beginning is at present scarcely more than a prophecy that the public secondary school will ultimately take over what is in the present situation unquestionably a peculiar service of the private school.[15]

Cole agrees that this function is important:

> Another service of private education which the public schools as now organized either do not or should not be expected to perform is to take charge of a boy. The theoretical justification for this is open to question, though the practical need is becoming increasingly greater. The children of broken homes need attention whether the cause be death, divorce, or the fact that both parents are workers. The supervision of such children in a boarding school seems the best substitute available at the present time.[16]

Fenton has made an interesting comment relative to this function:

> Perhaps the most significant reason for the existence of private schools is the fact of broken or inadequate homes. . . .

[15] *Ibid.* p. 215-216.
[16] Cole. *Op. cit.* p. 238.

> Of course, the significance of the private school, in this connection consists not in the fact of their private organization, but simply in the fact of their being boarding schools, since this type of institution has not yet been developed by the state to meet this need.[17]

A limitation of the investigation of Methodist secondary schools is that very few of the data gathered throw any light upon the service rendered in replacing the home. However, at one of the smaller institutions, which has very few pupils who reside within commuting distance and which admits only girls, the chief administrative officer was asked to check each pupil known to come from a broken home. The number checked constituted 43 per cent of the entire enrollment. From the evidence given by other investigators and from the limited data of this study, it seems likely that Methodist secondary schools do render a service and can continue to do so for a long time by replacing the home.

To care for the misfits of the public high school. This function of private secondary schools, which is fourth in frequency of mention by the writers listed in Table 1, has many phases, some of which are discussed by Stearns in the following quotation:

> During recent years a significant function of the academy has been to offer an increasing number of boys the opportunity to complete their preparation for college. The majority of our high schools are fully competent to give their students a thorough preparation of this kind. In small towns and outlying districts this is not always possible. Boys from these localities then frequently find it desirable, if not actually necessary, to pass a year or two in schools away from home in order to make their entrance to college secure. Frequently, too, the best high schools are dominated by the influence and requirements of those higher institutions that happen to be close at hand and to which the majority of candidates regularly apply. For this majority the preparation for college may be as thorough and complete as can be desired. But when, as often happens, boys from these schools desire to enter other and more remote institutions, they find frequently enough that their preparation does not meet in essential particulars the entrance requirements of the chosen college.
>
> Not infrequently students in the midst of their high school courses suddenly awaken to the desirability of a college education. . . .
>
> Up to the time of this awakening these students have looked upon the general course of study offered by the local

[17] Norman Fenton. "Aspects of the Private School Problem." *School and Society,* XVIII, August 18, 1923. 202–203.

> school as sufficient for their needs. Now with the change of objective a complete readjustment becomes necessary. Even if his local school offers in other courses the special studies he requires to gain the desired end, the student is generally unwilling to drop back and begin his work again with lower classes. Such a step involves what the Chinese would call "loss of face." It is a natural feeling; and many a boy who finds himself in this uncomfortable situation prefers to make a fresh start in some other school where he will be free from conditions that he has come to regard as real handicaps in his further school work. To these boys the academy offers many attractions.
>
> A fair percentage of the student body is made up of working boys, boys of limited financial means, who somewhat late in life have found it possible for the first time to secure an education or have had awakened within them the desire to secure one.[18]

Thayer discusses other phases of this function:

> Up to the present time the superior boy is the one neglected in our schools. So much energy is spent in bringing the inferior up to the average and the average up to the superior that the really superior student marks time in the process of education.[19]

From the evidence at hand it is very difficult to determine whether or not Methodist secondary schools are rendering a service to misfits of public high schools. However, the following findings suggest that such a service is being rendered: (1) the percentage of overage pupils, particularly boys, is higher for Methodist secondary schools than for any other private or public school group for which data are available; (2) a large percentage of Methodist secondary pupils have previously enrolled for high school work in some other institution. The scarcity of data relative to this function in Methodist schools and in other private secondary schools shows that there is need for additional research before this function can be justified.

To raise academic standards, to have superior academic programs. This function, with two others, is suggested by Thayer in his discussion of "The Future Trend of the Private School." Summarizing, he says:

> It seems then to be clear that the future trend of the private school must be in those directions in which it can show a real reason for its existence and its ability to make its peculiar contributions. It cannot for a long time continue as a commercial venture or to cater to idiosyncrasy. Any attempt

[18] Alfred E. Stearns. "The American Academy," *Op. cit.* p. 17–19, 34.
[19] William G. Thayer. *Op. cit.* p. 247.

> to rival the national school is futile both because of the limit of its resources and also because the national school is the most honored of our institutions. The schools' task is to furnish a complete education with the responsibility of the fourfold demand. In the last analysis the only virtue the private school can claim is its complete freedom, and its only right to survive depends on the attainment of its freedom and its proper use of it. This chapter has tried to show that these ends can be secured only so far as the private school is competent to raise academic standards, to train superior scholars and to produce leadership in service in the democracy. Admitting that the private school has been an essential part of national education, it does not follow that it will continue to be, unless it can make its own contribution worthy of its peculiar opportunity.[20]

This study produced no evidence that the educational programs of Methodist secondary schools "raise academic standards" or "have superior academic programs." Except in isolated instances, the data reveal marked inadequacies in the educational programs, as evidenced by: (1) extreme conservatism of curriculums; (2) absence of recent attempts to enrich curriculums which overemphasize the college preparatory aim; (3) noticeably low accomplishment in reading by the pupils in the Southern Schools; (4) lack or insufficiency of professional training of instructors; (5) inexperience or overexperience of instructors; (6) neglect of supervision of instruction; (7) lack of experimentation; and (8) low salaries for instructors.

The final test of an academic program is the product. The study did not include an investigation of the success of graduates; therefore, the conclusion of the preceding paragraph should be considered as only tentative.

To prepare for college. Concerning this function of private secondary schools, Stearns states: "Preparation for college early became an important part of the academy's work. That this was not intended to be the chief function of the academy has already been shown."[21]

In discussing the college preparatory function Croswell says:

> But great as are the hopes for public schools, nevertheless, as far as special preparation is concerned, this will probably in the end remain a factor most stimulating chiefly to the

[20] *Ibid.* p. 270-271.
[21] Alfred E. Stearns. "The American Academy." *Op. cit.* p. 12.

creation of appropriate private schools, as it is now a leading interest among them.[22]

Mattfield contributes additional findings:

> At least the boys from such institutions [private] usually do better in the entrance examinations than the students from high schools. There, however, the superiority ceases as has been shown, for example, by recent reports from Princeton and Harvard.[23]

Koos also is doubtful of the validity of this function:

> The case that can be made for the college-preparatory service of the private secondary school from evidence at hand is at least only a doubtful one. As far as the Minnesota study is concerned, the only group of private schools showing an advantage over public schools in this respect were the independent schools within the Twin Cities. For this group the favorable differences, although small, were consistent. In all other comparisons the public schools held the advantage. Private schools certainly fare no better in the related comparisons reported by others that were summarized in Chapter IV. As far as evidence now available shows, there is little ground for regarding college preparation as a peculiar province of the private secondary school.[24]

Thayer[25] states that the greatest asset to the private school, its freedom, has been lost in the almost exclusive attention given to preparation for college entrance examinations. Neither Thayer nor Ryan[26] lists college preparation as a function of private schools.

Chapman suggests:

> One way of laying the ghost of college examinations would be for some school to cut loose from the whole college system and prepare its boys for an imaginary college—giving them what they ought to know, in the headmaster's discretion, and letting them take their chances at the examinations.[27]

Methodist schools do not claim to be merely college preparatory schools. In statements of aims, they have included preparation for college less frequently than have other private schools. Methodist schools have organized a large number of curriculums

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[22] Croswell. *Op. cit.* p. 240.

[23] H. W. Mattfield, Jr. "Can Any Good Thing Come Out of the Private School?" *School and Society,* XXII, August 22, 1925. p. 229–34.

[24] Koos. *Op. cit.* p. 213.

[25] William G. Thayer. *Op. cit.* p. 235.

[26] W. Carson Ryan, Jr. *Friends' School—Report of a Study of Schools under Friends' Meetings, or Conducted by Friends.* . . . Bulletin of Swarthmore College, XXIV, No. 3, Supplement, Third month, 1927. p. 44.

[27] John Ray Chapman. "Our Great Private Schools." *Atlantic Monthly,* December, 1924. p. 747.

for the "non-college-going" pupils. However, in many of these curriculums the influence of the college preparatory function is evident. Data on the intentions of pupils as to college attendance indicate that Methodist schools are better justified in being concerned with the college preparatory function than are public high schools for which data were available. The Methodist schools, however, should give less attention than other private school groups to this function. The mental ability of a great many of the pupils of Methodist secondary schools is much below normal. Such pupils should not be given college preparatory curriculums.

In this study no attempt was made to determine whether the graduates of Methodist schools are better prepared for college than are graduates of other private schools or of public high schools. However, since the Methodist schools are found to be superior in only a few of the comparisons which are made in the study, it may be inferred that they are no better than other private schools in the field of college preparation. Application of the findings of Koos' study of Minnesota schools supports this inference. Koos found the private schools of Minnesota, with the exception of non-denominational schools in the Twin Cities, actually inferior to the public schools of that state in college preparatory work. Further research, however, is necessary before a conclusion can be reached as to the fulfillment of the college preparatory function in Methodist secondary schools.

To develop systematic habits of work and thought. Stearns lists this function, which he explains as follows:

> One of the chief functions of the preparatory school must always be to develop among its pupils systematic habits of work and thought. It is recognized by all that the individual subjects taught may be of little if any use to the pupil in later life. Many of these are necessary foundations for more advanced and specialized work still to be pursued. A few may have an immediate and practical value. Some, however, are sure to be early discarded and largely forgotten. But in all of these the opportunity is presented of including systematic habits of thought and methods of work, and without these no boy can hope to attain success in any line of endeavor.[28]

The development of systematic habits of work and thought is a desirable objective in all secondary education. This study

[28] Stearns. *Op. cit.* p. 41.

provided no objective data in regard to this function. Many people, however, consider private schools better able than public schools to provide training in systematic work and thought habits, because of the constant day-and-night supervision possible in the boarding schools.

To provide for social selection. Crosswell states: "On the basis of social selection there are reared the most famous and perhaps the best of private schools."[29] Few private schools have definitely claimed this as one of their functions, although many of them often suggest it in their published literature. "Each student entering the Seminary is expected to present social and financial references," says the 1929-30 catalogue of School No. 3. Similar statements appear in other catalogues.

Cannon classifies the exclusiveness of private schools into three types:

> There seem to be three main currents of feeling which lie at the base of this apostasy—all three types of human exclusiveness. Exclusiveness as a moral attitude is singularly out of place in a country built up as ours has been; and yet its disaffecting influence has penetrated into the very heart of our educational system. The type most important, as far as numbers are concerned, is religious exclusiveness. . . .
>
> The second type of exclusiveness is social. Parents who fear for their children physical or moral contamination from the children of less favored families . . . send their children to private schools. . . .
>
> The third type of exclusiveness is intellectual. . . .[30]

Briggs expresses a contempt for this function:

> The very segregation of children in private schools with the pretension of affording special privileges, whether they do or not, makes it difficult for them not to look on themselves as in one sense or another superior to the masses, who have to attend public schools.[31]

Mattfield discusses this and other functions of the private school:

> In communities where there are good public schools, most citizens will think of one of three causes when a fellow townsman sends his children to private institutions: either he has done so from notions of social superiority, snobbery if you will; or his children have failed to keep up with the work of the local high school; or he has lost control of them (or has

[29] Croswell. *Op. cit.* p. 241.
[30] C. J. Cannon. "The Dissociated School." *Atlantic Monthly,* November, 1923. p. 612–614.
[31] Briggs. *Op. cit.* p. 92.

> wearied of controlling them any longer.) And probably in most cases some such circumstance is the reason that has brought the pupils of the average private school to its walls. Of course neither the parents nor the headmasters describe the facts in this fashion, may hardly be conscious of them, for they will usually disguise the whole situation behind such phrases as "superior moral tone, strict discipline, character training, and individual attention."[32]

There is evidence that most of the Methodist secondary schools do not consider social selection as one of their functions. A study of the social and economic status of the fathers of these pupils shows large representations from each occupational group. The rates charged in a majority of Methodist schools are relatively low; opportunity is given to pupils for self-help and scholarships are frequently provided. Various denominational and religious sects are represented in the student bodies. The mental ability of the pupils does not in general exceed normal.

Thus, it is fairly obvious that the Methodist secondary schools do not consider as their function social selection, whether it be economic, religious, or intellectual.

To provide secondary education for communities which either have no public high schools or have inadequate high school facilities. In the discussion of this function there is very noticeable lack of any objective data relative to its validity. The opinions of several writers are of interest. Koos makes the following statement:

> No evidence on such a service was presented in the foregoing chapters. The writer recalls, among all the more than fifty private schools represented in the Minnesota investigation, one parish school conducted in a rural community in which no public high school was being maintained. In these days of rapid development of public secondary education we may well doubt that the proportionate frequency of this service is more than occasional. On the other hand, there is the counter complaint in many small communities with struggling high schools (and sometimes larger communities) that competition of schools on private foundations in the same communities hinders the proper development of public high schools. This hindrance, although the complaint is plausible, seems not yet to have been established in recorded fact.[33]

Briggs, commenting upon private schools, says that "they tend to weaken or destroy the interest of their patrons in public education."[34]

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[32] Mattfield. *Op. cit.* p. 230-231.
[33] Koos. *Op. cit.* p. 213-214.
[34] Briggs. *Op. cit.* p. 90.

Fenton sees the validity of this function. He says:

> Where the public schools have fallen into the hands of politicians or have insufficient accommodations or inadequate teachers or facilities, parents are justified in sending their children where they can be better cared for. A legislative body that cuts public school appropriations greatly aids the growth of private schools.[35]

Undoubtedly, there will always be those who are dissatisfied in some way with the public high schools. Whether the provision of secondary education for the children of such parents is a valid function of private schools is a matter of opinion.

This function, however, has other important considerations. Nine of the Methodist secondary schools are located in communities that do not have public high schools. It is a debatable question as to when a community is economically able to provide, with whatever outside aid it may be eligible to receive, a public high school. No attempt has been made in this study to determine scientifically whether the Methodist schools located in communities not having public high schools are justified in providing secondary education for the general public. Of the eight Southern Schools, three, Schools No. 17, 18, and 21, are located in sections that are most likely to be economically unable to provide at public expense opportunities for secondary education. The service of these schools is recognized to be temporary, however. The rather rapid decrease in the number of Methodist secondary schools in the South during the past twenty years is due primarily to the policy of continuing such a school only until the community is economically able to provide its own high school. The four Eastern Schools which serve as public high schools for local communities are probably hindering the development of public high schools in these communities.

To train leadership for service in a democracy. Thayer, in his quotation given on a preceding page, mentions this purpose of private secondary schools. It is impossible to discuss all of the implications of this broad function because few data necessary for an evaluation have been secured for Methodist secondary schools. A superior academic program is one essential for the performance of this function. As shown in a preceding section, the evidence indicates that superior programs are not characteristic of Methodist secondary schools.

[35] Fenton. *Op. cit.* p. 203.

The social studies are generally considered valuable in training leadership for service in a democracy. Unfortunately, the social studies of the Methodist secondary schools are the most meager and conservative to be found in any group of public or private schools for which data were available. Successfully administered school government can contribute considerably to the accomplishment of this function. Methodist secondary schools have made very little progress in the introduction of pupil-participation in school government. The example set by members of the instructional staffs in their work with religious and community enterprises may aid the school in accomplishing this function. The evidence obtained from the Methodist institutions shows no outstanding interest in community religious and civic activities on the part of many of the staff members.

Another contributing factor in the performance of this and other functions receiving more consideration today than formerly is the influence upon the pupils by the administrative and business policies of the institution. The theory is that efficient business management of institutions exerts a desirable influence upon the pupils and, therefore, aids in accomplishing the function now being considered. The following findings of this study suggest that many of the Methodist secondary schools are not effective in this respect: (1) in many instances adequate protection of funds is not provided; (2) endowment funds at some institutions have been dissipated; (3) pupils and parents often have been allowed to evade the payment of their just financial obligations to the schools; (4) large debts have been assumed through accumulated current operating deficits and plant expansion; and (5) financial accounting systems and pupil records are inadequate.

The evidence of this investigation reveals Methodist secondary schools as institutions which are unlikely to excel in the performance of the advocated function of producing "leadership for service in a democracy." Again lack of sufficient data makes final conclusions impossible.

To provide an additional year of training for college after graduation from public high school. Stearns, discussing this function of private schools, says:

> Still another class from which the academy draws each year a few students is made up of those whose parents look

> upon the academy as a desirable stepping stone between the restriction of home or a home school and the freedom of college life. In some cases the immaturity of the boy concerned will furnish the chief argument in favor of placing him for a year or two in a large academy preparatory to his admission into the higher institution. Not infrequently the plan commends itself through the belief that the academy with its larger responsibilities and its emphasis on self-reliance and individual initiative will develop in the individual those habits of thought and work and conduct, that ability to mingle and hold his own with his fellows, so essential to one who is to get the best results from his college course.[38]

Some of the Methodist schools have definitely advocated an extra year for adequate preparation for college. In this connection the following statement, made by Professor Robert N. Corwin, Chairman of the Board of Admissions at Yale, in the *New York Times* of March 7, 1931, is at point:

> The notion seems to prevail rather generally that an additional year of work at a fitting school specializing in smaller classes and individual instruction will remedy any evidence of a previous lack of ability or incentive. It is becoming less possible each year, however, to give encouragement to those applicants who find it either expedient or necessary to spend an additional or fifth year in preparing a weak record, for it has been necessary to refuse admission each year to an increasing number of those who failed to finish their secondary school course on schedule time or in regular order.

Few of the findings of this study have any direct bearing upon the justification of this function for Methodist secondary schools. It seems probable, however, that because of the rapid changes now being made in our educational procedures this function will soon be unjustifiable. The changes in education which support this observation are: (1) an increase in counselling for public high schools, (2) an increase in the number of junior colleges, (3) a tendency for four-year colleges and for universities to make a sharp distinction between the "lower" and "upper" divisions, with a certificate or degree given at the completion of the lower division, (4) a greater effort to articulate the freshman year of college with the high school programs, (5) the development by colleges and universities of elaborate orientation and counselling programs for freshmen.

To provide "finishing" for high school graduates who will

[38] Stearns. *Op. cit.* p. 19-20.

not attend college. This function is suggested by Stearns in the following statement:

> In a sense, our largest and oldest academies offer to their pupils conditions and opportunities very closely paralleling those that characterized our colleges not many years ago. Here one may mingle as in college with boys representing almost all the states of the union and all classes of society. The sons of business and professional men, or artisans and farmers are here thrown together in intimate and healthful contact. The courses of study include many subjects found until recently in most of the colleges and universities. Some of them are still parts of the regular college courses. The instructors, generally the equals and often the superiors of the average college professor, here guide and stimulate the students' intellectual life. Extra curriculum activities tend to develop the whole man. On all sides he is surrounded by conditions that tend to broaden his outlook, quicken his mind and test and strengthen his moral fiber. Naturally enough then many promising boys are led to believe that the academy offers peculiar advantages to them in the final preparation they are to make for that life-work upon which they are so soon to enter.[37]

The data for Methodist secondary schools are inconclusive in regard to this function. However, the function is closely related to the one discussed in the preceding section and the trends in education noted there will probably be just as effective in banishing the idea of the "finishing schools" as they will be in making unnecessary an additional year above high school work for adequate college preparation. Thus, it appears that although this function may have had some importance in the past when higher education beyond the high school had to be for four years or the student was considered a failure, it is being made insignificant by new developments in education.

To provide vocational training. Crosswell has discussed this function of private schools in the following quotation:

> Children have been obliged to seek their vocational training in America out of school. . . .
>
> Now private vocational schools . . . have made up for a large amount of this neglected work.[38]

It is undoubtedly true that the private schools have contributed considerably to education by their pioneer work in vocational training. The early manual labor schools, which include some of the Methodist schools of the study, led in this work. Vocational curriculums are now frequently found in the Meth-

[37] Stearns. *Op. cit.* p. 21.
[38] Croswell. *Op. cit.* p. 237.

odist schools. However, there are in these schools no programs of vocational training which are distinctive or superior to those commonly found in public high schools. Commercial courses constitute the major portion of vocational work in the Eastern Schools and agriculture courses are found in several of the Southern Schools.

Summary. Nine writers, whose published statements were analyzed, advocated most frequently the following four purposes as functions of the private secondary school: (1) to conduct experimentation; (2) to give religious and moral training; (3) to replace the home; (4) to care for misfits of the public high school. Each of the nine other functions was advocated by one, two, or three of the writers whose statements were studied. Of the thirteen functions which have been listed and discussed, only three seem to offer opportunity to Methodist secondary schools for a service that does not duplicate the work of the public high school. These three are: *to care for misfits of the public high school; to replace the home;* and *to provide secondary education for communities which either have no public high school or have inadequate public high school facilities.* The last mentioned function seems applicable to only three of the Methodist schools. It should be pointed out that there is no evidence to indicate the number of pupils who need the services suggested by these functions. Nor is there evidence to indicate that such services will be needed indefinitely. However, if the Methodist secondary schools accept as their special service the functions which do not duplicate work in the public high school and if they include in their programs some of the functions not peculiar to private schools, such as experimentation and religious and moral training, they may render genuine service to society and to education in general.

The Junior-College Field

Some of the twenty-four Methodist secondary schools recognize that the functions which they have performed in the past no longer represent a distinctive service. Two of the Eastern Schools, just before the beginning of this study, organized junior-college work in addition to the high school program. At the same time three other schools of this group were petitioning

the Board of Education of the Methodist Episcopal Church for approval of their plan to add junior-college work to the work which they were offering. Another of the Eastern Schools, which had organized junior-college work, because of serious financial conditions discontinued this part of the program a few years later. One of the Southern Schools has been giving work at the junior-college level since 1906. This rather marked trend to the consideration of junior-college work, besides indicating a recognition of the need of finding new functions, suggests a possible field of service. It is not in the scope of this investigation to make an intensive study of each institution to determine the advisability of its entering the junior-college field. However, some general considerations are presented.

Koos,[39] after making extended studies, concluded that the type of junior college most likely to achieve the special functions of such an institution is the public junior college. This finding suggests that private junior colleges have no assurance that they will not sometime in the future be forced to surrender their work to public institutions. Thus, the Methodist schools of the study cannot enter this field with a feeling that their problem as to level of work to be offered is settled. The geographical location of the Methodist schools, however, is much to their favor in considering the junior-college field. Koos found "a much smaller representation of junior colleges in New England and the Middle Atlantic States than elsewhere."[40] While this statement intimates that the East is a fertile section for junior colleges, it also indicates that the section is not very sympathetic to such institutions.

The following finding of Koos is significant to the Southern Schools which plan to do junior college work.

> . . . [There is a] rather general distribution of private units to almost all sections of the country, but with a considerable degree of concentration in Missouri and the Southern States, a full half being in the South.[41]

Although service as a junior college may or may not be permanent for any of the Methodist secondary schools, it might be

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[39] Leonard v. Koos. *Junior College Movement.* Ginn and Company, Boston, Massachusetts, 1925. p. 372.
[40] *Ibid.* p. 11.
[41] *Ibid.*

that a distinctive service could be rendered by some of the schools of the Eastern Group in "selling" junior-college work to a section of the country which has in general frowned upon it. This might be considered as a "trail blazing" adventure to be discarded when the public is able and willing to include this work in its public system.

This investigation has revealed a serious situation for Methodist secondary schools and for private secondary schools in general. But the facts should be frankly faced. Evading the fundamental issues and resting passively upon the glory of the past is similar to allowing the foundation of a structure to rot and collapse, when a scientific study of this foundation would have resulted in the discovery of the decayed portions which might have been repaired—at least for a time.